

Counselling – Promoting and Managing Psychological Well-Being



It's tough being a young person in this modern fast-paced, high-pressured world. Not only are adolescents bombarded with messages from society about what they should 'look' like and how to be successful, but their brains are also undergoing significant re-modelling. This adolescent brain re-modelling can make managing any school day or life event a challenge as our emotions get amplified during this period of change. However, adolescence is not all doom and gloom!

Young people who are feeling wobbly, out of sorts, or stuck, can with support understand how their brain works and makes them react a certain way. They can then learn skills and strategies to handle their changing social and emotional landscape. Guidance counselling supports a young person to make sense of their world and identify the problem and the desired solution.

Our counselling practise is guided by Te Whare Tapa Wha, a Māori model of health. We believe this gives value to the whole person and looks at health in all five areas of well-being.

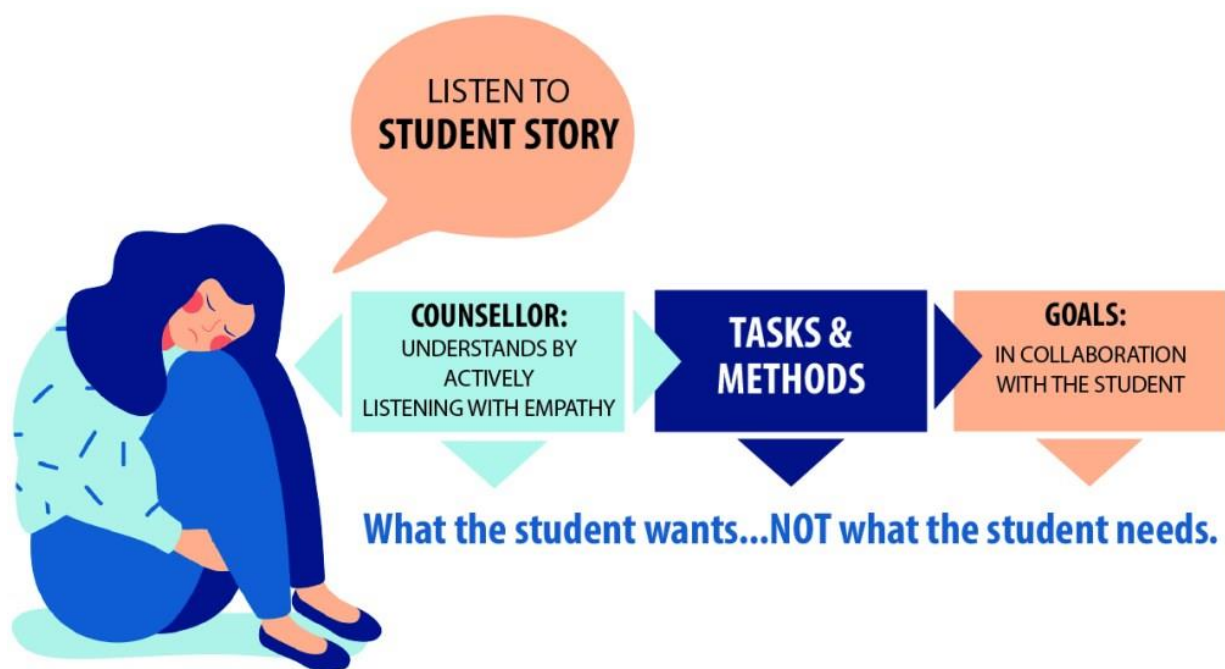
Click to view [Hauroa Wellness Goal Setting](#)

Counselling is all about the therapeutic alliance.

Essentially this means “the relationship”. A counsellor has a range of approaches (narrative, person-centred, psychoanalytic, CBT) for working with

a client. However, if they are unable to engage effectively and listen to the identified problem, then the situation for the client will remain unchanged.

The Aquinas College team are structured, client-centred, and goal-focused counsellors. Our practice is based on a collaborative framework that empowers the client as the expert in their life.



We collaborate with clients throughout the counselling process and work together to decide which task, or tasks, to try first. We discuss resources, people, supports, and inner strengths. A focus on what they decide to act on is followed by planning in detail how to begin and when.

An example of working with inner strength is asking “How did you get through that moment”? It is often by highlighting these moments or exceptions to how

they dealt with their issue as a way of moving forward. When working with anxiety, for example, helping the client make room for their anxiety helps them to break down the fear that feeds the problem.

The graphic (above) guides the way we work with clients, and we offer a range of approaches that sit within the frame. The client chooses which method is the best fit for them. Some strategies we use include:

ACT (Acceptance Commitment Therapy)

1. Learning new skills to handle painful thoughts and feelings more effectively and live in the present.
2. Clarify values, set meaningful goals, and do things that expand and enrich life in the long run.

Mindfulness Therapy

Mindfulness is a mental state of awareness, openness and focus. Mindfulness skills can be learned and can effectively help the client reduce stress, enhance performance, manage emotions and generally improve life quality.

Both ACT and Mindfulness are complementary therapies.

Family Systems Therapy

Often the young person is the identified patient of a family issue. Therefore working with family or individual relationships within the family (young person and a parent/s) can have better outcomes for the young person. Effective family systems have a set of helpful and useful values, and this type of therapy helps promote flexible thinking and opens up opportunities to interact in other ways with each other which helps bring positive change.

CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy)

All of our physical sensations (body), everything we do (behaviour), everything we feel (mood) and our thinking (mind) are all inextricably linked to the brain. And all of these interact with the world around us (environment). CBT looks at what changes the client wants in their lives. However, a lot of the time, we cannot change reality because the truth is what it is. CBT then helps the client learn skills for how to evaluate the facts:

- What do you think about what has happened or is happening?
- How you respond.